

POLITICAL CORRUPTION AND CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Political corruption is endemic, institutionalized, and like COVID-19, it has become pandemic or widespread in Nigeria. Its pervasive prevalence underpins and reinforces other ills that challenge the very basis of national prosperity and development such as poverty, poor healthcare system, poor service delivery, and infrastructural decay. In fact, it is the core of the many devastating ills plaguing good governance and crippling the nation's effort towards achieving greatness. From the issue of outright looting and or embezzlement of public funds to diversion and mismanagement of government treasury, ethnicity or tribalism in the distribution of national goods, etc., the emergence of the novel coronavirus in Nigeria has further exposed the deepening systemic nature of political corruption in the country. This unfortunate situation spanned the three tiers of government even in the ongoing struggle to contain and combat the ravaging coronavirus pandemic. This paper, therefore, examines political corruption in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic and its consequences in Nigeria. It exposes the massive and rising wave of political corruption, lies, deceit, intrigues, and unnecessary politicization in the management and containment of the

virus in Nigeria. In the final analysis, the paper concludes by recommending an urgent national ethical rebirth among the leaders and citizens of the country, as well as the strengthening of the institutions and organizations charged with the responsibility of fighting and checkmating political corrupt practices in order to effectively reduce the scourge to the barest minimum in the country.

Keywords: Political corruption, coronavirus pandemic, governance, deceit, ethical rebirth.

Introduction

Coronavirus is a novel contagious virus straining global health and threatening human life and survival. It is exponentially spreading and ravaging humanity *englobo* and has humbled all nations of the world, both developed and underdeveloped, big and small, rich and poor, including the so-called technologically advanced countries. The disease, which is said to affect the lungs, causes a respiratory illness with symptoms like cold, throat infection, cough, fever, and in critical cases, difficulty in breathing. Its origin is traced to Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in November 2019. The novel coronavirus (SARS-COV-2) was officially declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) as Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on February 12, 2020, and a pandemic on March 30, 2020. Since then there are observable cases of the virus in almost all the countries and continents of the world, except in the cold and iced continent of Antarctica. Other six continents of the world, from Africa to Australia, South America to North America, Asia to Europe, are having the boiling toil and colossal effect of the virus. There is no doubt therefore that:

We live in uncharted times.
The world's most powerful
nations have been brought to
their knees. Both the learned
and the lay have fallen ill and
died. Neither the mighty nor
the weak has been spared.
Dead bodies have become a
common scene in some of the
world's most celebrated
cities, while celebrities have
been forced to keep indoors.
The leisure class and the
working class have similarly
been quarantined (Obeng-
Odoom, 2020, p.4).

In Nigeria as in the rest of the world, lives are lost, businesses and sources of livelihood and survival are crushed. Schools and universities, libraries, markets, recreation centers, and even places of worship are under lock and keys. Certainly, there is a huge loss of income. Within March to May 2020, the price of crude oil has fallen below \$22 per barrel – the lowest since 2003. Humans who once had and enjoyed freedom especially to move about are now restricted and "locked down" like domestic animals by the government. In Rivers State of Nigeria lockdown appears to be the strategy of the government to punish any local government area and community that does not comply with the sit-at-home order and social distancing measures of the government to combat the virus.

Political leaders and managers are under enormous pressure as they

must decide what to keep open, what to close, workers to keep, and who and when to retrench. The fear and panic come less from the risk of infection and more from the growing reality of its fall out (Lenore, 2020, p.2).

“We have not chosen confinement, but we can choose how to adapt and respond... Confinement can thus help us to re-organize our priorities, now and in the future” (Esteve, et al. 2020, p.8). Nevertheless, there is suffering and misery all over the world; humanity and human ways of doing things are no longer the same. There is a new economic and social reality as a result of the pandemic. More still, there is the fear of the unknown, including the apparent fear that the world is coming to an end. “The certainty of the past has been broken. *An Age of Uncertainty* ... is upon us”(Obeng-Odoom 2020, p.4). According to Peters,

COVID-19 marks the return of a very old – and familiar – enemy. Throughout history, nothing has killed more human beings than the viruses, bacteria, and parasites that cause disease. Not natural disasters like earthquakes or volcanoes, not war – not even close (2020, p.12).

As bad as this situation, many unscrupulous and corrupt individuals, governments, and countries seem to be benefiting from it. It has become a potent avenue for

political office holders and corrupt officials in Nigeria to enrich themselves by stealing, embezzling, and crassly flouting the rational, legal, moral values and principles of a modern and democratic state. This is called political corruption and Nigeria is one of those climes where this form of corruption is endemic especially in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. In this period of global health and economic crises, there are extraordinary revelations of systemic political corruption in Nigeria. Millions of Naira have been siphoned, squandered, and would likely not be accounted for even at the end of the fight against coronavirus and its eventual fading away in the country. This unfortunate situation spanned the three tiers of government even in the ongoing struggle to contain and combat the ravaging pandemic. This paper, therefore, examines political corruption in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic in Nigeria. It exposes the massive and rising wave of political corruption, lies, deceit, intrigues, and unnecessary politicization in the management and containment of the virus in the country.

Political Corruption: A Definitional Dilemma

Corruption is a disease, a cancer that eats into the cultural, political, and economic fabric of society, and destroys the functioning of the vital organ (Amundsen 1991, p.1). It shares so many similarities with coronavirus; both are symptomatic and virally infectious. Corruption is both a symptom and a consequence of poverty in as much as it is virally infectious in poor societies. It breeds poverty while poverty conversely aids corruption to flourish and survive. Corruption has become institutionalized and assaulted every facet of the country's political and socio-economic life (Aiyede 2006, p. 38). It is so pervasive and ravenous

that it became the major explanation or reason for all military coups and takeover in the country. It is the instrument of regime legitimation and stability (Gboyega 2005, p.3). Corruption has been differently defined. The simplest but popular definition of corruption is the one adopted by the World Bank, which holds that corruption is “the abuse of public power for private benefit” (Fagbadeo 2007, p.29). Lipset and Lenz defined corruption as an “effort to secure wealth or power through illegal means – private gain at public expense” (2000, p.18). Nigeria presents a veritable case study of corruption in general and political corruption in particular.

Political corruption is a segment of the general idea of corruption. Like the general notion of corruption, the general understanding of the meaning, nature, and scope of political corruption has become dilemmatic. It is difficult to articulate an uncontestable definition of it. For one thing, any definition of political corruption must first and foremost grapple with the meaning of politics and what constitutes the political, because these understandings invariably affect and influence the very meaning of political corruption. In other words, the understanding of political corruption may vary according to the nature of the political system in operation. For instance, the nature and form of political corruption in a democratic system of government may turn out not to be so in non-democratic systems of government. Therefore, any definition of political corruption will at best provide a starting point for identifying and analyzing different strands of political corruption because there exist different forms of political corruption with a wide range of characteristics. The understanding of politics and the political is that it is an activity that takes place in the public sphere among certain

individuals known as political gladiators or actors. This public sphere is, nevertheless, the sphere where political corruption takes place.

Political corruption can therefore be said to occur when government officials use the positions they occupy or government machinery or instruments of power to engender illegitimate gains for themselves, family members, tribes, or their cronies. This definition is very narrow because it does not adequately cover other important aspects of political corruption. Political corruption also includes the circumvention of the law, the misuse of public authority by political decision-makers. Amundsen puts it thus:

Political corruption is when laws and regulations are more or less systematically abused by the ruler, side-stopped, ignored, or even tailored to fit their interests. Political corruption is a deviation from the rational-legal values and principles of the modern state, and the basic problem is the weak accountability between the governors and the governed (1991, p.3).

Political corruption extends further to include the repression of political opponents, controlling of citizens by force, and forcefully restricting their movements and activities as well as the exercise of undue or excessive force and brutality of the citizens in the name of enforcing government restriction orders, and other civil rights violations. It is a manifest authoritarian action of a

governor in complete disregard for the rule of law. Again, Amundsen writes:

Political corruption is one of the basic modes of operation of authoritarian regimes. It is one of the mechanisms through which the authoritarian power-holders enrich themselves. Here, corruption is rarely a disease that the responsible politicians are eager to avoid, it is a deliberate, wanted and applied practice; it is one of the ruler's modes of enrichment and economic control (1991, p.4).

There is a state of unrestrained political corruption known as Kleptocracy in Nigeria. Kleptocracy literally means “rule by thieves”. It is a government with corrupt leaders or politicians (Kleptocrats) who use the position they occupy to exploit the state for personal aggrandizement. They use their positions to pass laws that will enrich them and their people. All these constitute the meaning of political corruption.

Political Corruption and Coronavirus Pandemic in Nigeria

Political corruption is endemic and pandemic in Nigeria. In fact, Nigeria represents an extreme, endemic, and high level of political corruption. It is a huge challenge in the country especially in governance and legitimacy of leadership. It is a challenge to the achievement of a solution

to poverty, disease, and development tragedy in the country. It has seriously impeded the growth and effective utilization of resources not only in Nigeria but in the whole continent of Africa (Egbue2006, p. 84). The point is that political corruption causes the malfunctioning of the political society; it impairs integrity, virtue and moral principle (Odumakin 2010, p.34). Consequently, it will be eradicated from its root as people would begin to think less of themselves and more of others and the political community in general. It is synonymous with moral decay, uncleanness, want of character, and value deterioration which not only debases but also destroys a nation's integrity, innovations, democratic structures and development (Kuta 2010, p.36). There is a nexus between corruption and coronavirus; they are characteristically alike. According to Amundsen,

Corruption is found almost everywhere, but it is stubbornly entrenched in the poor countries of sub-Saharan African, it is widespread in Latin America, it is deep-rooted in many of the newly industrialized countries, and it is reaching alarming proportions in several of the Post-communist countries (1991, p.1).

A comparative reflection of the above will reveal a co-causal relationship between corruption and coronavirus, especially in the current scheme of global infection. While it is true that like corruption, coronavirus is found

everywhere, it is untrue that it is stubbornly entrenched in Africa. Currently, coronavirus infection statistics reveals that Africa has fewer recorded cases compared to continents like North America: the United States, which is the epicenter of the virus in the world; transcontinental country like Spain; Europe: the United Kingdom and Italy, which rank second, and that of Asia: Russia, China, and India that rank third most coronavirus infected continents of the world. The hot climatic temperature of Africa and the fact that Africans are used to malaria infection may be the saving grace for them. Coronavirus has similar symptoms with malaria. However, in this global health emergency, the philosophy of viruses and pandemic, which is anchored on universal ethics of care is important in our relationship with others. Peters was right when he argued:

The philosophy of pandemic is truly a philosophy of all peoples. It reflects not only the human significance of pestilence and plague, or the rise of modern viruses like COVID-19 that show the transition across species but also themes of individual/community-self-interest and collective responsibility (2020, p.13).

He goes further to state that:

The philosophy of viruses and pandemic is often conceived of as an ethics of self-isolation and of the human effects of social

isolation, as well as its community breaches. Such a philosophy may also be seen as an ethics of care for those infected, a duty of treatment (2020, p.13).

At this point let us examine the prevalence of political corruption in the wake of the Coronavirus pandemic in Nigeria. Let us examine the manifestations of political intrigues, falsehood, and deceit as well as conspiracies and contradictions that surround COVID-19 in Nigeria. Let us also reflect on issues surrounding relief funds, donations, and allocation as well as the distribution of palliatives to the vulnerable and poorest of the poor in the country.

Political Intrigues, Falsehood and Coronavirus Pandemic

When matters become political in Nigeria nobody seems to be taken seriously because there will be intrigues, lies, falsehood and deception. This is not different even with the emergence of the coronavirus pandemic in Nigeria. The churches are not left out with their false and deceptive predictions about the end of the virus, which never came to pass. Obeng-Odoom writes that “Coronavirus brought increasing faith in prediction and precision which have become the new economic religion” (2020, p.5). The emergence of the virus in Nigeria opened up more spaces for “immoral” and anti-political attitudes in the country, especially in the identification, management, and containment of the virus. Onajite, in an Online Publication: *The Witness* quotes the Kogi State Governor, Yahaya Bello of saying that the spread of coronavirus in Nigeria is

“Political, full of lies and an avenue for political office holders and corrupt officials to embezzle and steal the nation’s resources”. This, no doubt, constitutes part of the challenges confronting the containment of the virus. This issue bothers heavily on the inaccuracy of data or the figure of those who are infected. Accurate provision of statistical data and figure is necessary not only for the management of those infected but most importantly, for containing and combating the virus. This issue is fundamentally challenging in view of the fact that the figure of infected persons in the country seems to either be over-blotted or underestimated. There is no reliable and accurate documentation of the figures or numbers of individuals infected with the COVID-19 pandemic. Again, it is said that the pandemic is yet without a curative vaccine, yet hundreds of people have been “treated” and discharged. All these have further exposed the deepening systemic nature of political corruption in Nigeria. There is a massive and rising wave of political corruption, lies, deceit, intrigues, and unnecessary politicization in the management and containment of coronavirus in Nigeria.

In some states, there is a mass burial of dead people, yet the citizens are misinformed and misled by their governments that the virus is non-existent whereas hundreds of lives are lost on a daily basis. Some citizens are still in doubt about the existence of the virus in Nigeria; they believe Black people cannot have it. An example of such a State is Kano in Northern Nigeria where the government claimed that the deaths in the state are not coronavirus related but preferred to call it “mysterious deaths”. The consequence later turned grave as it was later ascertained it is coronavirus with alarming cases of infected people and deaths. While some state governments are

concealing the number of cases in their states, others are over-bloating theirs to attract donations and financial aids from individuals, agencies, and the federal government. On the part of the citizens, it is disturbing that some individuals conceal their status. They prefer to die rather than present themselves for a test. Some of those who are tested positive are reported to have escaped from the treatment or isolation centres because of the lack of adequate attention.

Coronavirus in Nigeria: Contradictions and Conspiracies

The novel coronavirus pandemic is shrouded with a lot of contradictions, misinformation, and conspiracy theories. One such issue that explains the situation is the fire outbreak at the office of the Accountant General of the Federation on April 8, 2020. With this inferno, there were some conjectures here and there in the country. One of such conjectures is that the fire outbreak was a pretext for the perpetrators to steal from the Covid-19 relief funds and donations, and to destroy its official documents and records. This insinuation may not be wrong especially with the experience of the "snake swallowed money" saga. However, while it is true that a section of the Accountant General's office was engulfed by fire, the Finance Minister, Ms. ZainabShamsuna Ahmed debunked the allegation that the Federal Government of Nigeria lost COVID-19 donations to the fire incident.

Whether this is true or not, the novel coronavirus pandemic has further exposed the level of political corruption in Nigeria. It has also exposed how unlawful and undemocratic our society and leaders are. Rule of law for instance is one of the defining lineaments of a democratic society or government, therefore it is a contradiction to

claim that a government is democratic when there is no strict adherence to rule of law. The entrenchment of the rule of law enhances the re-ordering of politics and strengthens democratic experimentation. The significance of this rests on the fact that even with the institution of democracy in the country, Nigeria seems to function as though there is no law in existence. The country seems to be lawless and lawlessness seems to be lawful in the hands of the top political class, the rich and powerful; and the law courts seem to be afraid of dispensing justice despite their role to ensure that justice is done. Law is politically constitutive. In modern Nigeria, where politics has been given a distinctive form, practice, and content, where the political actors have created a realm in which the politics of power and interests is subordinate to the politics of norm, the place of law in politics will provide the basis for a solution since law structures and conditions politics to checkmate and constrain political actions.

One example of contradiction is the unlawful and undemocratic tendencies and actions of the Executive Governor of Rivers State who by executive fiat directed and personally supervised the demolition of a private property allegedly used for commercial purposes. The governor alleged that the said demolished property – a hotel was used for unlawful purposes and secondly, that the hotel opened for business in defiance to the lockdown order issued by the State Government for the containment and management of the spread of coronavirus pandemic in the state, and other sundry crimes. The manifest action of the governor which can best be described as unlawful and undemocratic is a contradiction to the principles and tenets of a democratic system of government that the country claims to practice. One would have expected that in a

genuinely democratic system, the place or role of the law court cannot be underestimated rather than an arbitrary show of force and dictatorship by the Governor, a lawyer, and life bencher in the law profession in Nigeria. What a contradiction! The 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) is very clear when it states that an accused is deemed innocent until he is proven and declared guilty by a competent court of law.

Again, despite the nation-wide inter-state lockdown, a measure legally instituted by the Federal Government to contain the spread of the ravaging pandemic in the country, some governors especially in the Northern part of the country are frustrating and sabotaging this effort by dispersing the *almajiris* in their states to other states, especially the Southern states of the country. The *almajiris* are young boys from the northern part of Nigeria who seek Islamic knowledge. They are mostly known for begging as a means of livelihood for themselves and their parents. They are loaded like essential commodities or disposal items, if you like, into tankers built for conveying petroleum products or trucks used to convey foodstuffs, building materials, and livestock to beat lockdown regulations and enforcement. The rationale for this move at this point in the global health crisis is still not very clear; although some people are sensing some security challenges that may arise thereof. This situation no doubt calls for worry as some of these children are tested positive for coronavirus. Besides being sabotage, the dispersal of these children in their numbers is a conspiracy. It is political corruption. The height of this conspiracy is that high-ranking politicians and law enforcement agents aid and abet this migration thereby undermining the security and public

health of the citizens of other states by exposing them to the high risk of contaminating the virus.

Distribution of Palliatives to the Vulnerable

The distribution of government palliatives to the poor and needy in the society is witnessing intractable corrupt practices whereby relief materials like money, food items, etc. are diverted and converted into personal use by some members of the so-called coronavirus palliative committee. The federal, state, and local government levels are immersed in this unwholesome tendency. There is no equity and fairness in the distribution of palliatives across the country. It is discriminatively based on political party, religious affiliation, and ethnicity. Nigeria is already known for politics of ethnicity, favoritism or cronyism in everything, but the emergence of coronavirus provides more fertile ground for it to flourish. This is political corruption; for according to Amundsen:

Favoritism or cronyism is to grant offices or benefits to friends and relatives, regardless of merit. In the political sphere, favoritism is the penchant of state officials and politicians, who have access to state resources and the power to decide upon the distribution of these, to give preferential treatment to certain people when distributing resources (1991, p.14).

like Oyo and Ogun, there is an allegation that the Federal Government distributed expired bags of rice not good for consumption to the citizens of those states. Two trucks of 1800 bags of rice which Oyo State Government described as “weevil-infested” rice were returned and abandoned at the gate of the Nigeria Customs Service. COVID-19 palliative distribution in Nigeria is a scam widely referred to as “COVID-419” by Nigerians. It is sectional bigotry, for instance, the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management, and Social Development Ms. Sadiya Umar-Farouk insensitively said that “There are no poor people in the South”, a claim she made in defense of why the palliatives particularly the twenty thousand Naira Conditional Cash Transfer to the country’s poorest of the poor and most vulnerable people were not extended to the Southern part of the country. The Minister also claimed that over 2.6 million households have so far benefited within ten days of distribution. The lack of accountability and transparency in the modality used for the selection and distribution of these palliatives has left Nigerians in absolute bewilderment, shock, and panic and thus necessitates why many individuals and groups are questioning the process. Just as Obeng-Odoom observed, and rightly, so that “The foundations of the COVID-19 pandemic, arising inequality and social stratification, risk becoming endemic, hidden by thick debris of shock and panic” (2020, p.4).

A consortium of anti-corruption organizations under the *Upright for Nigeria Stand against Corruption*, which includes: *Action Aid Nigeria*, *Centre for Democracy and Development*, *Centre for Communication and Social Impact*, as well as the *Coalition of Niger Delta Agitators*, have demanded that the government of Nigeria should

t of COVID-19 palliatives beneficiaries. The Coalition of Niger Delta Agitator to be precise has alleged unprecedented marginalization in the distribution of palliatives by the federal government of Nigeria to cushion the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country. According to Duku in *Vanguard Online* “The distribution of palliatives by the federal government so far to cushion the effects to the pandemic leaves much to be desired. The exercise as currently handled by the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development is smirked with irregularities, discrimination, and clear lack of transparency.” The people of the Northern part of Nigeria, Duku argues, enjoy the preference of the Federal Government in the distribution of palliatives unlike their counterparts in the Niger Delta region who have been sidelined, marginalized, and shortchanged. The Ministry charged with the responsibility of distributing these palliatives has therefore become a conduit pipe for siphoning money and relief materials for a selected region of the country.

A group known as *Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project* (SERAP) has equally asked the Federal Government and the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to make available details of how funds and private sector’s donations to the most vulnerable people in the country were spent. According to the group in *Vanguard Online* “We are seriously concerned that millions of the country’s poorest and most vulnerable people have not benefited from the announced palliatives, donations, cash payments, cash transfers, and other benefits.” In the Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated April 4, 2020, and signed by the Deputy Director of SERAP, Kolawole Oluwadare, the organization notes that “Providing

the information would help to address the concerns of many Nigerians regarding allegations of corruption and politicization in the distribution of benefits, improve public trust, and enhance the integrity of the entire process and moods of distribution of reliefs/ benefits to those Nigerians.” It is worth clarifying that all that SERAP is seeking for is nothing but a thorough and transparent investigation of allegations of corruption in the distribution of relief funds and materials for COVID-19 and the politicization of the process. However, with the prevailing “Nigerian Factor” as experienced in almost everything aspect of the country, it is quite understandable why the Federal Government and its agencies that are charged with the investigation and prosecution of corruption and its related offenses may remain silent. One shining act of bold selfless leadership at the top, such as unambiguous refusal to be corrupt or tolerate corruption at the fountain of authority will radiate powerful sensations of well-being and pride through every nerve and artery of national life (Achebe 1983, p.17).

Federal Government Relief Funds and its Allocation

In the wake of the coronavirus outbreak in Nigeria, the Federal Government of Nigeria received donations of billions of Naira and other relief materials from private individuals, organizations, companies, agencies, and corporate bodies and countries. It also received donations from foreign organizations and countries like the European Union, Jack Ma Foundation, Bill Gates Foundation, and China. According to the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), a total of 25.8 billion Naira has so far been donated by 107 Nigerian companies and notable individuals as relief funds to combat coronavirus in Nigeria. It is on record that the

Nigerian private sector donates more than most other African countries in the fight against COVID-19. European Union alone contributed 21 billion Naira to the implementation of a coordinated COVID-19 response in Nigeria. Nigerian government received ventilators, diagnostic reagents, and general personal protective equipment from organizations and prominent individuals. But so far, the public is only informed about 10 billion Naira released to Lagos state – the epicenter of the novel virus in Nigeria and 5 billion Naira allocated to the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC). These allocations, particularly the former, have triggered serious quest or clamor by other State Governors who insist on their share of the money. This agitation gives rise to the amusing indiscriminate and unprecedented upsurge or increase in the figure of alleged coronavirus infected persons across many states, with the aim of attracting the Federal Government's attention for their share of the money. This means that the figures of coronavirus infected persons in the country is politicized, over-bloated or hyped and therefore not genuinely reflecting the number of infected persons in the country. It, therefore, makes the whole situation appear like "a child's play" or a joke, and thus responsible for the reason why most people still question the existence of coronavirus in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The basic thesis or argument of this paper is that the emergence of the novel coronavirus pandemic in Nigeria has further exposed the widespread and systemic nature of political corruption in Nigeria. There are numerous instances of corruption in the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria, especially in the distribution of

palliatives to the vulnerable people. Political corruption is really endemic in Nigeria; it is an outcome of a collapsed ethical value. The collapsed ethical values in the country require an urgent national ethical rebirth among the leaders and citizens to effectively reduce the scourge of political corruption to the barest minimum. This can be achieved through the institution of a National Ethical Rebirth programme which will be made compulsory in the educational system at all levels in the country. The content of this programme will, unlike the already existing ones like *Citizenship Education*, be richly designed to inculcate morals and the cultures of rule of law, transparency, accountability, and probity. The National Orientation Agency (NOA) will have to be effective to be part of this policy programme. It is glad to know that recently the ICPC and NOA are considering a similar proposal which they call *National Policy on Ethics and Integrity for Nigeria*. However, it must be mentioned that Nigeria is not lacking in policies in the fight against corruption, but what is lacking is the political will to enforce these policies. Therefore, the government must rise to its responsibilities, strengthen and empower the institutions and organizations charged with the responsibilities of fighting and checkmating political corrupt practices in the country by guaranteeing financial autonomy or independence for them. These institutions, which include the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), the Legislature, and the Judiciary have not lived up to the expectation overtime in the fight against corruption in the country. The government must also ensure that stiffer penalties are meted out to those who are convicted of political corruption, while effort must be made to re-order or re-

organize politics in the country to eliminate the evils of ethnicity, ‘god-fatherism’, etc.

In conclusion, the ongoing global pandemic must remind us that there are an inseparable co-causal and co-evolution between human beings and nature. Therefore, the Ethics of Care must be extended to one another as well as to non-humans, including animal species and ecosystems in order to reduce the possibility of future pandemics that may result from closer contact between humans and other species (Esteve 2020, p.8). Nigerians must focus on the Ethics of Care at this period of the global crisis and redefine their lives and relationships with others. Such re-orientation must include the individual and collective resolution to do what is morally right and more essential to our development challenges, like the provision of good health care facilities in the country. Ethics of care are values of wellbeing and solidarity to all. This is the time to show solidarity and profound humanism such as love, care, generosity, and mutual connection. For, coronavirus according to Sean Illing, is not an outlier; it is part of our interconnected viral age which we must adapt to.

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